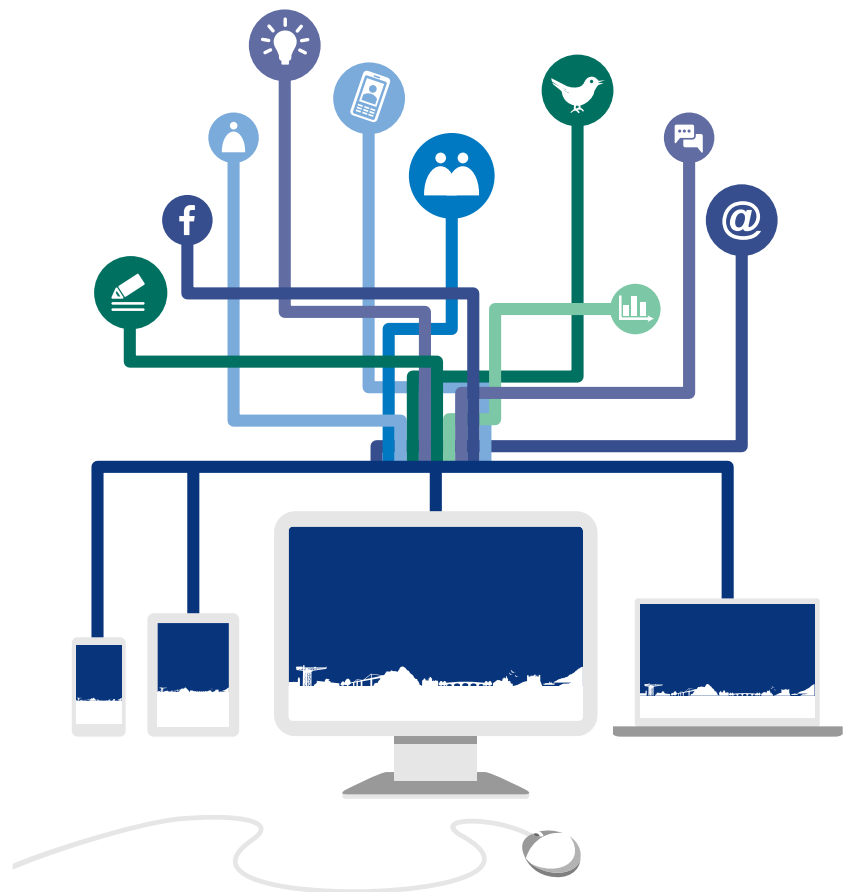


WEST
DUNBARTONSHIRE
COUNCIL

Communications Strategy 2017 - 2022



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Executive summary



West Dunbartonshire Council has a strategic ambition to deliver high quality services, led by priorities identified by the communities of West Dunbartonshire, in an open and transparent way.

Corporate Communications has a key role to play in supporting that aspiration over the next five years. It will do that by delivering first class proactive and reactive communications which inform and positively change the behaviour of our residents and employees for the benefit of all.

We will demonstrate success by increasing satisfaction levels in our services, improving the sense of engagement that residents feel in the work of the Council, enhancing the reputation of the organisation and achieving improved employee motivation and morale.

To complement this, a comprehensive reactive service will be delivered robustly to protect the Council from unfair criticism and keep people safe and informed during periods of unexpected disruption.

Our approach

Research from Ipsos MORI shows that the better informed residents are about their Council services, the more satisfied they feel. Therefore, providing accurate information to residents is vital. We are committed to delivering clear, consistent and innovative communications co-ordinated across all channels to increase awareness of the Council's services and investment and improve our reputation.

While undertaking this work, our guiding principle will be to provide value for money to our residents and colleagues. We should never lose sight of the fact that we are a support service and must constantly prove our worth to the organisation and community.

Over the next five years, digital and social media will play an ever greater role in communicating with our communities and are set to become the pre-eminent channel for our service. We will build on the success of our previous approaches to digital, capitalising on new technology and embracing new methods for driving social and digital engagement.

Our Public Relations activity will aim to improve upon our strong track record for promoting key Council achievements and initiatives, and robustly defend the authority against unfair criticism.

Internal communications will be directed towards supporting the Council's objectives, engaging employees and ensuring they have a strong understanding of changes taking place within the Council and of any major achievements.

Our design service will complement our digital and communications activity, focusing on promoting understanding and helping to clearly articulate the Council's messages. Our marketing activity will support service delivery and develop campaigns based on insight and behavioural change which reflect the priorities of our communities.

Across all of its work the Council will abide by its commitment and duty to eliminate discrimination, promote equal opportunities and promote good relations as required by the Equality Act 2010. Further information on this can be found in the Council's 'Communicating Effectively' strategy document.



West
Dunbartonshire
COUNCIL



RESIDENTS



WEBSITE



MOBILE



SOCIAL MEDIA



PRINT



EMAIL

Strategic priorities

In reviewing the Council's 2017/22 Strategic Plan, Corporate Communications has identified the following two strategic priorities which we will contribute towards over the next five years.

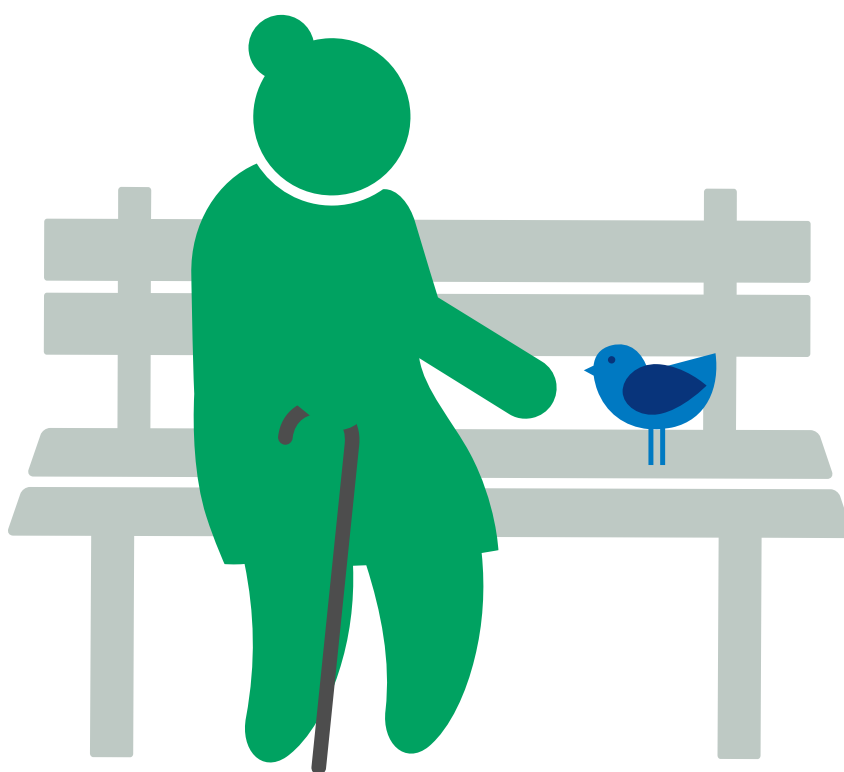
Meaningful engagement with active, empowered and informed citizens who feel safe and engaged

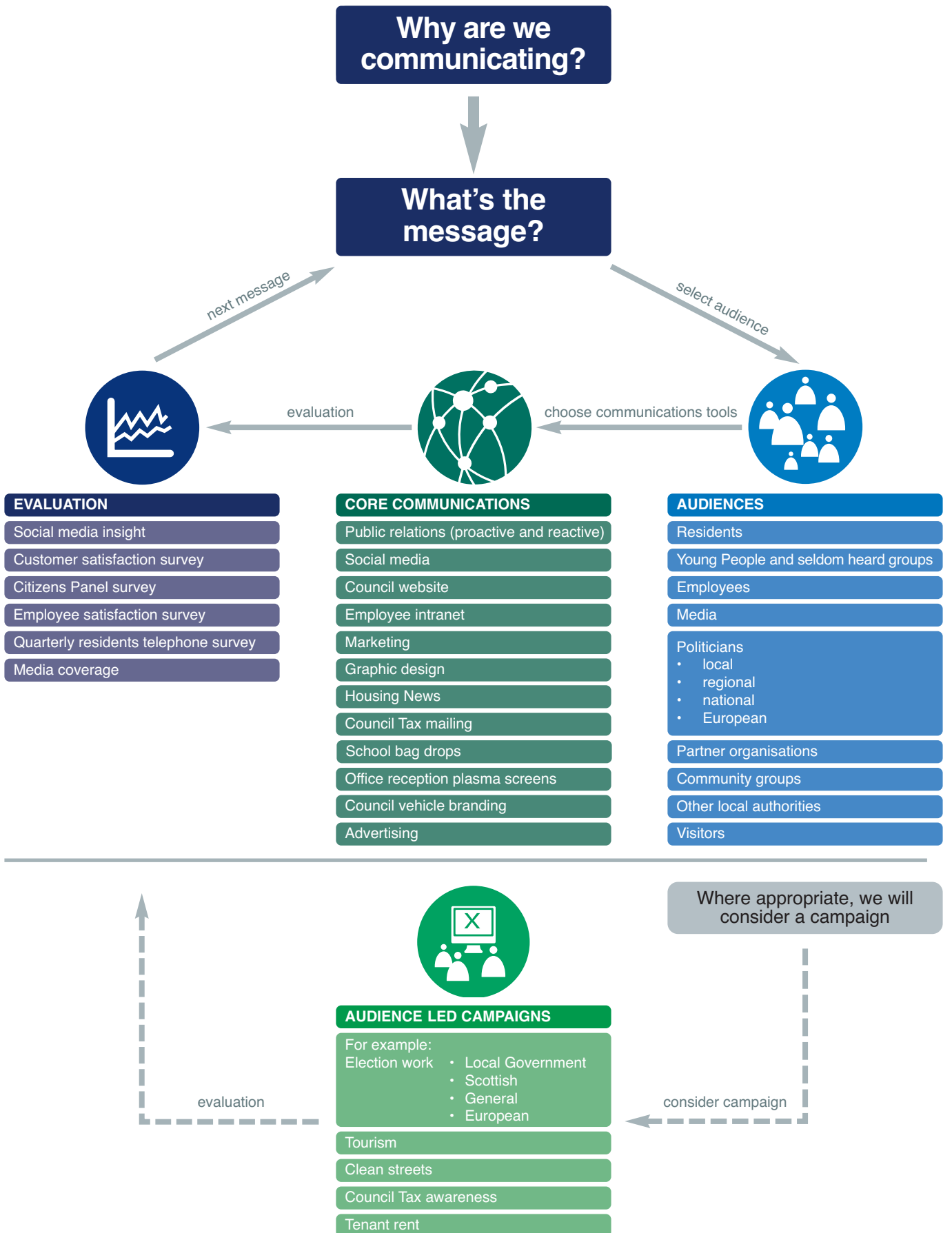
Efficient and effective frontline services that improve the everyday lives of residents

Our integrated communications model

When targeting these priorities we will maximise our resources and ensure we provide the best value for money using a comprehensive communications model.

This has identified our audiences, considered how best to target them, and put in place robust evaluation measures. With every new project we identify the key audience, select the communication tools that are most suitable, and use established evaluation methods to measure success. Where appropriate, we will also consider if the project warrants a more comprehensive campaign.





Our skills and assets

- **Social media and digital engagement**
- **Public Relations**
- **Internal communications and employee engagement**
- **Marketing and design**
- **Commercial activity and events**

How we will deploy our skills and assets

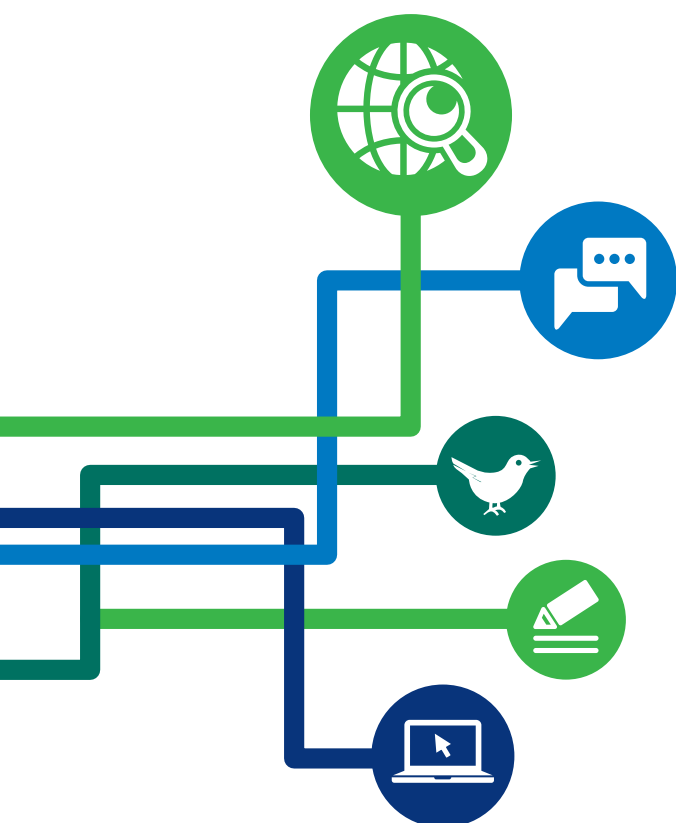
Social media and digital engagement

Social media is the fastest growing communication tool in the world with millions of users across the globe and we have responded to a demand from our communities to engage with us in this way. Our platforms provide a unique opportunity for the Council to share its messages and respond to its communities and we see these as the pre-eminent channels for issuing news, engaging with residents and gaining vital feedback.

Engagement is the key to continued success across our social media platforms and in the future we will be ranked based on our interactions with our online communities. We will dedicate resources to creating compelling online content which inspires our communities to join in our online conversations and builds our audience and influence as a result. It has been shown that visual content generates a larger reach and engagement than text alone. We will maximise the use of video, images and graphics on our platforms to engage wider audiences.

We will continue to monitor and respond to emerging social media trends, developing existing channels and launching new channels to ensure we reach the widest audience. We will also build online relationships with our partners including Police, Fire Service and NHS and community groups to collaborate, share and amplify social media messages.

We will use social media for listening and responding to the views and needs of our communities and, through analytics, will tailor our content and ensure that their voices are reflected in services delivery and approaches.



Through our partnership with Customer Services, believed to be unique in Scotland, we will continue to support the wider digital channel shift and develop our social media as one of the key vehicles for delivering customer service. We will also investigate use of Artificial Intelligence to maximise service delivery.

Public Relations

We will align our resources and develop our skills to respond to the changing media landscape, including the growth of live online reporting from print journalists as well as an increase in citizen journalism. These new approaches require quicker and more active responses from communications officers and we will continue to ensure we deliver a comprehensive reactive service to protect the Council from unfair criticism. The increasing use of digital channels has also led to a requirement for employee to use their copy-writing skills in a different way by creating bespoke content tailored for different audiences and channels. We will also continue to develop video and photography skills to support our work and aspirations. We will build on this further in the coming years by improving our use of audience insight and data when developing communications materials and inform our work.

We will also continue to develop our skills and offer beyond the traditional boundaries of media management to fully support the Council's strategic priorities by developing innovative communications which are informative, clear and co-ordinated across all channels. We will support projects and respond to change by planning and developing a broad range of communications materials which complement our media and social media activity with

messaging which is consistent. Within the next five years, traditional press releases will no longer be a core method of issuing news and the team will keep up with the pace of change to ensure the Council's Public Relations remains relevant and effective.

Internal communications and employee engagement

Effective internal communications positively influence employee engagement and employee interaction with external stakeholders. We will ensure our employees are informed and engaged to encourage them to act as ambassadors for the Council.

Digital communications are growing faster than any other channel and we have responded to this by redesigning the intranet home page to create a social media type platform, with a scrolling news feed and the facility for employee to like and comment on news articles. We recognise that many of our employees do not have access to a workplace PC. Council communications, including the bi-monthly employee bulletin, and employee news are available on the employee intranet, which is available from home and other locations via mobile phones, devices and PCs. We will continue to raise awareness of intranet access from home and devise new methods of communications targeted at this group. A key element of our service is employee engagement activity to engage leaders, managers and employees across the organisation and this includes the bi-annual survey and employee recognition events. Going forward, we will continue to promote the opportunities for training, learning and development and for employees to feedback on working for the Council. The Council supports joint trades unions in the

workplace and Communications will assist the unions to raise awareness of their organisations. At a senior level, the Council communicates with its trades unions colleagues through a number of channels including the Strategic Leadership Group, Joint Consultative Forum and Joint Consultative Committee. In addition Strategic Leads communicate and consult with individual unions on matters relating to specific areas of business. Communications will continue to support this activity where required.

We will increase participation in the employee survey to ensure employees feel fully involved in service development and improvements, and that their views are reflected in future plans.

Employee recognition helps to ensure the workforce feels valued and is a key driver of employee retention. We will ensure employees are recognised for their contributions in West Dunbartonshire through the Being the Best, Going the Extra Mile, Coffee with the Chief and the annual employee awards.

Marketing and graphic design

We will continue to develop our digital marketing offer and take advantage of the opportunities social media advertising presents to reach a wider and more targeted audience at a lower cost than traditional methods. Digital media is also enhancing our insight on our audience and has the additional benefit of providing comprehensive results on the reach of online campaigns.

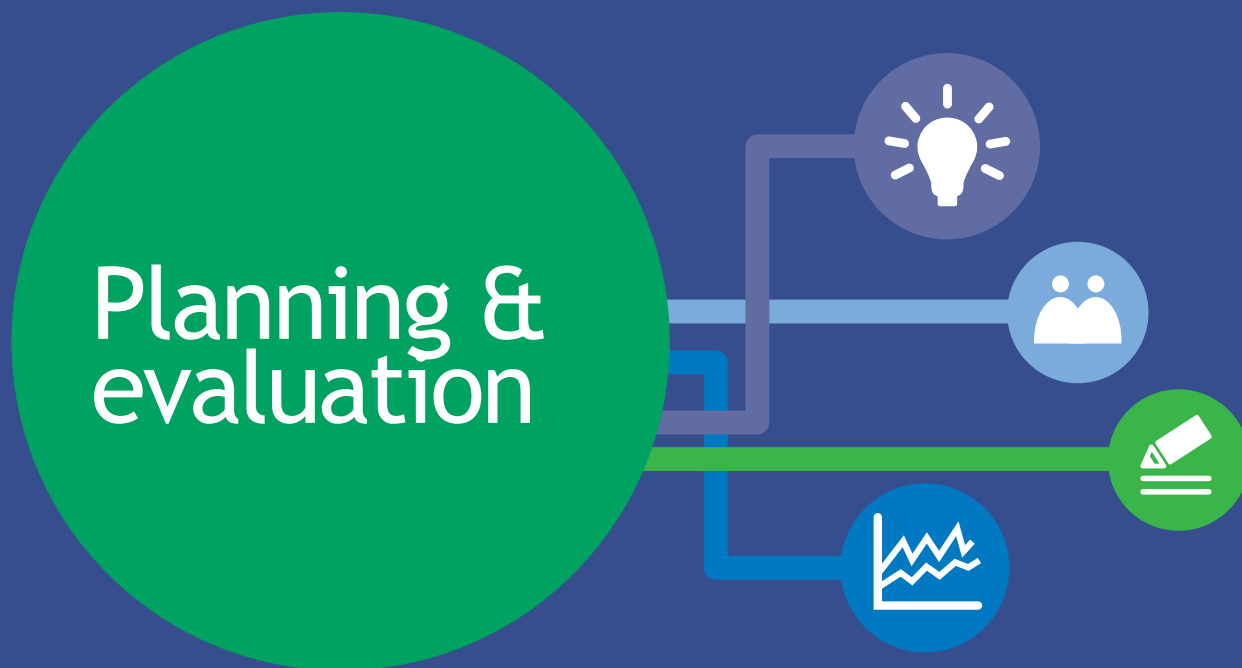
Based on insight and behavioural change concepts, our campaigns have achieved results locally and have been recognised nationally. We use traditional and digital channels in our marketing campaigns - litter, fostering, recycling,

Be the Best. Going forward, we will continue to deliver strong locally-led campaigns which reflect the priorities of our communities.

We will support our activity with comprehensive graphic design which helps clearly articulate the Council's messages and informs our communities. In 2017, Communications introduced brand guidelines to ensure the Council is clearly identified and all branding is applied correctly and consistently. We will continue to manage the brand on behalf of the Council and will extend this to support service delivery, influencing the visual appearance of key assets including libraries, museums and Clydebank Town Hall to provide welcoming, attractive venues for our residents, visitors and partners.

Commercial activity and events

We recognise that we all have a responsibility to deliver best value and generate efficiencies for the Council. We will build on our reputation and brand to increase our local, regional and national recognition and encourage potential business opportunities and partnerships. We will embrace opportunities to support commercial activity to generate income to reinvest in West Dunbartonshire, including through sponsorship of Council events, advertising on Council assets and providing external clients, including those in the public sector, with marketing, communications, digital and design support. In addition, we will continue to support the delivery of corporate events and VIP visits.





STRATEGIC PRIORITY

Meaningful engagement with active, empowered and informed citizens who feel safe and engaged

SUPPORTING OUTCOMES	WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?
Strong and active communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase communications with citizens ● Develop existing social media channels ● Launch new social media channels ● Enhance knowledge and increase use of insight ● Develop use of social media as a listening tool ● Increase social media audience across each platform ● Increase social media engagement through new approach to content ● Develop online community and influence through enhancing partner relationships ● Deliver four issues of Housing News annually

We will do this by:

2021/22 target

<p>Telephone survey:</p> <p>Increasing number of residents agreeing that West Dunbartonshire Council is efficient and well run in resident survey</p> <p>Increasing number of residents who feel the Council keeps them informed</p>	<p>90%</p> <p>85%</p>
<p>Housing News survey:</p> <p>Tenants' satisfaction with Housing News</p>	<p>92% (maintain)</p>
<p>Social media insight:</p> <p>Increasing reach, engagement and followers across all social media platforms</p> <p>Increasing levels of engagement on social media</p>	<p>equivalent to 40% of the population</p> <p>25%</p>



STRATEGIC PRIORITY

Efficient and effective frontline services that improve the everyday lives of residents

SUPPORTING OUTCOMES	WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?
<p>A continuously improving Council delivering best value</p> <p>A committed and skilled workforce</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Investigate use of Artificial Intelligence to support social media channel shift ● Support channel shift agenda through promotion of self-serve options ● Provide communications training to Council managers ● Introduce communications standards across the Council ● Support digital transformation internally through updating and informing employee ● Deliver six issues of employee bulletin annually ● Develop strategic communications expertise to manage change ● Increase participation in employee survey ● Continue to develop new proposals to generate income

We will do this by:

2021/22 target

<p>Employee survey:</p> <p>Increasing participation in employee survey</p> <p>Increasing number of employee indicating they are satisfied with communications</p> <p>Number of employees who feel reasonably informed about the Council</p>	<p>65%</p> <p>25% increase</p> <p>63%</p>
<p>Analysis of intranet reach:</p> <p>Increase in number of employee accessing intranet from home</p>	<p>20%</p>
<p>Communications survey:</p> <p>Satisfaction with media relations</p>	<p>94% (maintain)</p>
<p>Generating income for Council:</p> <p>Increasing income from sponsorship, advertising and delivering services for other organisations</p>	<p>£50k per annum</p>

